

**COSMIC CONFLICT AS A HERMENEUTICAL  
FRAMEWORK FOR MISSION THEOLOGY  
IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

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This research aims to rediscover mission as taught by the OT and to show how that mission is consistent with God's loving and just character as reflected in the whole Bible. Toward this end, the research surveys assumptions that influence OT mission theology and evaluates ways in which current theologies of mission and theological currents relate to the unity and continuity of the Bible. With this background, the study then proposes a comprehensive theological framework that preserves the unity of God's character and his mission.

Chapter 1 shows how the traditional understanding of centrifugal and centripetal mission is often based on uneven assumptions and indicates the need for a balanced approach to God's character and his mission.

Chapter 2 reviews the main mission theology works of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that deal primarily with the OT. The chapter shows that the development of mission theology was influenced by an array of events and extrabiblical assumptions that affected God's mission by assigning a different type of mission to each Testament, thereby missing the unity of Scripture.

Chapter 3 analyzes the basic assumptions of theological currents such as dispensationalism and covenant theology and shows how belief in the superiority of the NT over the OT affects the understanding of mission in the Bible. The chapter also shows how the outward focus of ecumenical mission leads to a distortion of the biblical text.

Chapter 4 looks first at basic biblical assumptions that should inform the reading of the text and uses these assumptions in an attempt to discover a comprehensive framework for building a mission theology. The second part of the chapter proposes the cosmic conflict as an all-encompassing framework that preserves the unity and continuity of Scripture. It addresses main thematic concerns of previous mission theologies and restores mission's rightful motivation and purpose.

Chapter 5 concludes the study by summarizing correctives to the popular understanding of God and mission (*missio Dei*) in the Bible that come from recognition of the universal dimension of the cosmic-conflict framework. This chapter also suggests further missiological implications of that framework.